

Sketch

Getting into the slaughter spirit



Simon Hoggart

JACQUES Chirac spoke to both Houses of Parliament yesterday...

We were in our places half an hour beforehand, giving us time to study the vast historical murals depicting Frenchmen being killed.

One shows the Meeting of Wellington and Blucher at Waterloo. The two men are on horseback. Around them, stretching off in every direction, are piles of dead bodies.

It may well have been the (perhaps apocryphal) exchange between Wellington and another man, quoted by Elizabeth Longford in her biography of the general.

I asked a helpful French reporter sitting next to me if there were similar French victories over the British.

Various dignitaries walked down the aisle in wigs, trumpets sounded, and a team of Yeomen of the Guard appeared on the platform.

back to Henry VII, when among other tasks, they had to make the king's bed each morning...

This was becoming obsessive. First Chirac is forced to eat beef. Then he is surrounded by people who scoff at beef for a living.

The president spoke in French. No more than nine MPs in 10 kept their headphones on for the simultaneous translation.

We had an 'attachement farouche' (a fierce friendship). Both nations had 'un esprit de tolérance'.

Nonsense, of course: all softening up for the cool instruction to join the single European currency.

The friendship Chirac spoke about bears no relation to anything we experienced. It is the friendship of the diplomatic reception, formed over the champagne and the Ferrero-Rocher chocolates.

Betty Boothroyd made a graceful speech in which she pointed out that, for most British people, the Greatest Living Frenchman was actually Eric Cantona.

Various dignitaries walked down the aisle in wigs, trumpets sounded, and a team of Yeomen of the Guard appeared on the platform.



President Chirac kisses the hand of the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, after addressing both houses of Parliament yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVE GALLOUX

Cabinet faces beef anger

Chirac supports Major stance

Michael White and Julie Wolf

THE Cabinet will today be forced to fend off pressure from Tory Euro-sceptics to retaliate against Britain's EU partners...

of disease, serious illness, and it is difficult to overcome that, he said.

take part in this great undertaking. It brought instant charges of bullying and elitism.

the media," the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, told MPs before the vote.

Officially interviewed by Channel 4 News last night warned it would be "calious" to move prematurely, given the level of public anxiety.

Mr Rifkind later said "useful progress" had been made, and warned against abandoning the diplomatic track.

First night

Dynamic display in metal tradition

Adam Sweeting

Smashing Pumpkins

Wembley Arena

BILLY Corgan couldn't resist a touch of irony after the Smashing Pumpkins were dragged out for the third batch of encores.

Wast the Pumpkins are in their native USA, putting, thin-skinned Billy can't stop paying far too much attention to the jibes and sideswipes of the British press.

Somebody died of a heart attack at a Pumpkins show in Dublin at the weekend, so the band must have viewed the scene with mixed emotions.

Although sceptics might see the Pumpkins as merely Billy Corgan's backing band, this was an often awesome exhibition of group dynamics and interplay.

They provided a potted history of Punkism on last year's double-disc set, Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness, which had everything from gothic-fine ballads and pseudo-renaissance instrumentals to the crunching hard rock which first got them confused with Grunge.

San Katz in New York

Hidden 'culture of sex bias' pervades the police force

Martin Walkwright

ALONG-serving police-woman, with a brief to help other women in one of the Britain's largest forces, broke down in tears yesterday as she told Leeds industrial tribunal of the hidden "culture of sexual harassment" maintained by male colleagues.

wearing the black ZERO shirt and silver trousers pictured in the Mellon Collie CD booklet, their stage show doesn't bear much relation to their records.

In thundering riff-driven stuff like Where Boys Fear To Tread or Zero, the Pumpkins plug straight into the great music tradition, far closer to the metronomic juggernaut of Metallica than to Pearl Jam or Nirvana.

Bodies, with its "love is suicide" refrain, is boiled down until it sounds like vast machinery trying to shudder itself to bits.

With the Pumpkins, things aren't black and white so much as cunningly shaded into one another.

Corgan unwound his guitar strings and lobbed them into the crowd, then they conducted a mellow four-part harmony for Farewell And Goodnight. You had the sense that anything was possible.

In its resolution, Spartanburg county council declared that "lifestyles advocated by the gay community should not be endorsed by government policy makers, because they are incompatible with the standard to which this community subscribes".

The move is a fresh blow to Gayme organisers who only last month announced that the torch, a symbol of the Olympic ideals of peace and non-partisanship, would avoid an Atlanta

EMU convergence criteria

Table with 3 columns: Inflation, Deficit, Debt. Rows for Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, UK.

Gay row bars Olympic torch

San Katz in New York

SOME people are wondering if the Olympic torch will ever make it to Atlanta. Since beginning its 15,000 mile journey across the United States last month, it has already been involved in an accident and almost been extinguished by high winds.

Now it faces a detour after local leaders in South Carolina challenged Olympic organisers to divert the symbolic relay by passing a distinctly non-Olympian resolution condemning homosexuality.

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Flickering flame: Olympic torch on the way to Games

suburb which had passed a similar anti-gay measure. The organising committee had already been forced to move preliminary rounds of the volleyball competition from Cobb County following protests by gay rights groups over the ordinance, which also barred groups promoting homosexual lifestyles from receiving public funds.

Leaders in Spartanburg, a booming city 200 miles north-east of Atlanta, insisted they had passed a similar resolution to protest against the Olympic committee's action against Cobb County.

"This is not gay-bashing," said Frank Billard, the councillor who proposed the measure. "It's a reaction. We have done this because the Olympic committee acted inappropriately."

The Atlanta committee for the Olympic Games yesterday warned that if the Spartanburg resolution was similar to the one passed by Cobb County, the route would probably be changed to bypass the area.

Following the decision to punish Cobb County, several other Georgia counties revoked similar anti-gay ordinances fearing they too would be cut out of the Olympic celebrations.

Kohl warns of tough decisions over euro

John Palmer in Brussels

AN unusually sombre Chancellor Helmut Kohl yesterday warned in Brussels that governments including that of Germany faced difficult economic decisions if the timetable for a single European currency is to be achieved.

The European Commission also conceded that success or failure in meeting the 1999 deadline now depends heavily on a widely forecast but still intangible recovery in growth throughout Europe.

In a report on the economic outlook for 1997 - the performance during which will form the basis for deciding single-currency membership - the Commission forecast that growth would rise to 2.4 per cent from 1.5 per cent this year.

But it warned that if recovery proved slow, and popular resistance prevented reductions in government budget deficits, this "might add to doubts among some observers as to whether a sufficient number of member states would be ready to participate in EMU at the starting date of January 1, 1999."

Against that, it expressed the hope that with interest rates and inflation at a long-term low "the revival in

economic activity could surprise in a positive manner once confidence is restored".

On this basis, the Commission last night declared that about half the EU's 15 member countries are on track to move to a single European currency by 1999.

Its latest forecasts implied that, unlike Britain, both France and Germany will meet the key conditions for monetary union next year.

But this unexpectedly optimistic conclusion is only reached on the assumption that all the latest economic austerity proposals unveiled in Bonn and Paris are successfully implemented.

It is the 1997 figures for inflation, budget deficits, government debt and other targets which will form the basis of a decision by EU heads of government early in 1998 about which countries can join the currency bloc.

The new forecasts were released after a meeting in Brussels between the German chancellor and all 20 Commission members largely devoted to the prospects for the single currency and for closer political union in the Maastricht treaty review conference.

The European commissioner for monetary affairs, Yves Thibault de Silguy, said last night that on current trends France, Germany,

Ireland, Luxembourg, Finland, the Netherlands and Denmark would meet the key Maastricht conditions for monetary union, while Sweden and Austria were also close to qualifying.

On present policies, Britain is assumed to have a budget deficit of 3.7 per cent in 1997, exceeded only by Italy and Greece. While paying tribute to the British government's efforts to bring down its deficit, the Commission makes it clear it sees little room for tax cuts at present.

It says in order for the British government "to respect the convergence programme targets, further action is needed both to compensate for the fiscal slippage in 1995 and an expected less rapid budgetary improvement in the short-term which is partly due to lower growth."

Dealers on the international financial markets will now have to balance doubts they have about the credibility of the Commission's forecasts with the clear expression of political will by Mr Kohl to overcome obstacles.

Although Britain is predicted to be significantly above the prescribed budget deficit limits next year, the government debt ratio at 56 per cent will be comfortably under the 60 per cent ceiling laid down in the treaty.

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Semtex dilemma brings Labour claims of 'breathtaking complacency' □ Lord Chief Justice called for urgent action 18 months ago

Howard ignored forensic warnings

MICHAEL Howard, the Home Secretary, ignored warnings from Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice, that action was urgently needed to improve the forensic service 18 months before the disclosure this week that contaminated equipment may put the convictions of at least 12 IRA bombers at risk. Lord Taylor warned Mr Howard in November 1994 that specific remedial action was "urgent and overdue".

He told the Academy of Forensic Scientists that the Home Secretary's "silence was deafening" on the issue. Mr Howard's lack of action led to accusations in the Commons yesterday that he had displayed a "disastrous combination of arrogance and ineptitude" in his handling of the matter. "We may end up with the worst of all worlds — innocent people in prison and the guilty walking free," claimed the shadow home secretary, Jack Straw. Mr Howard was forced to travel at short notice from the

Police Federation conference in Scarborough to make an emergency Commons statement on his disclosure that the centrifuge used to analyse samples had been contaminated with Semtex for the past six years, which called into question the safety of some of the most high-profile terrorist cases of recent years. The reforms endorsed by the Lord Chief Justice in November 1994 had first been put forward three years ago by the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, which was set up on the day that the Birmingham Six were freed.

Lord Taylor told the Home Secretary that his "silence was becoming deafening". The scientists at the laboratory involved in the latest blunder — the Fort Halstead Forensic Explosives Laboratory in Kent — were also involved in the presentation of unreliable forensic evidence in one of the most celebrated miscarriages of justice in the 1980s, that of the Maguire. Morale amongst Britain's forensic scientists has already been shaken by plans to close some laboratories and merge others. Staff at five of the seven forensic science laboratories

passed votes of no confidence in their management in the last two weeks. The Royal Commission on Criminal Justice made 40 recommendations, including establishment of an external Forensic Science Advisory Council, for improving performance and standards in the laboratories. In fact, these proposals were first put to the Royal Commission by Professor Brian Caddy on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry the very man Mr Howard this week put in charge of the independent inquiry into the latest blunders.

Mr Howard failed to answer when Mr Straw challenged him in the Commons to explain why he had not acted on these warnings. "On every occasion to date, ministers have shown breathtaking complacency in resisting proper independent scrutiny of the work of these laboratories," said Mr Straw. "The Home Secretary is directly and personally responsible for this failure to act." Mr Howard did disclose yesterday that the Home Office first learned of the mistake at the Sevenoaks laboratory on April 19 and that he had known of it for three

weeks. Mr Howard said he had been told orally on April 22 and was formally notified in a report on April 26. "It obviously does take a little time to decide on the form of the inquiry that is appropriate and to identify and approach the person best qualified to carry it out. When that process was complete, I brought the matter to the Commons. I simply do not see how I could possibly have acted more expeditiously," he said. The discovery of the blunders at the Sevenoaks laboratory will not only affect the cases of those who have al-

ready been convicted using its flawed evidence but also will throw into doubt a number of forthcoming trials where forensic results form a vital plank of the prosecution case. One prominent trial scheduled for later this year will involve Semtex test evidence as a key plank of the prosecution case. A CPS spokeswoman said yesterday that it would be awaiting the results of Prof Caddy's investigation before deciding on how to proceed. Amongst other cases involved are several against animal rights protesters.

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British writer wins female book prize

Dan Gjaister
Arts Correspondent

THE National Liberal Club in London reverberated to whoops and cheers last night when the British writer, Helen Dunmore, was awarded the first Orange prize for women writers of fiction. Ms Dunmore was presented with a statuette, called a Bessie, and a cheque for £30,000 by the actress Juliet Stevenson. The prize for women fiction writers in the English language ultimately came down to a choice between Ms Dunmore, the bookmakers' favourite and the American-born writer resident in Britain, Marianne Wiggins. Kate Mosse, chair of the judges, brushed aside criticism of the women-only prize, saying that it served to sell books. The third novel of a poet and children's writer, A Spell Of Winter is about a middle-class family in the run-up to the first world war. The Orange prize has been dogged by controversy since it was first announced. Born out of the Booker prize, the Orange followed in the best traditions of Britain's most famous literary award when the judges fell out as soon as the shortlist was announced. Val Hennessy, a member of the five-woman panel and chief book reviewer for the Daily Mail, said that of the 166 that had been submitted for the prize, she had "seldom come across books that were so bad".



HELEN DUNMORE
A SPELL OF WINTER

The prize was sparked by the late writer Angela Carter's failure to make the 1991 Booker Prize shortlist for her final novel, Wise Children. Only four out of 30 nominees for the Booker in the last five years have been women, while women have won the Nobel prize for literature on only eight occasions this century. Intended to counter perceived discrimination, the Orange prize succeeded in attracting charges of both discrimination and political correctness. Organisers argued that the Orange, open to women of any nationality writing in English, was actually more open than any of the other prizes, pointing out that the Booker is restricted to Commonwealth writers. The presence of four American writers and only two British women on the shortlist, however, attracted further criticism. Alarmed by the bad publicity, the initial sponsors of the prize, "Mitsubishi", withdrew their support in September 1994. It seemed that the project would falter, until an anonymous woman benefactor stepped forward to provide the £30,000 prize money in perpetuity, and Orange, the mobile telephone company, decided to sponsor the award with a commitment to spend £210,000 over the next three years. Despite the brickbats, organisers remained enthusiastic. Ms Mosse said that she was determined to persevere with a prize that rewarded "novels not writers, books not reputations".



Orange winner Helen Dunmore... 'I suppose I shall spend the £30,000 prize money very easily'

Profile

'An electrifying talent with a lyrical style'

A SPELL OF Winter is the third novel by the Bristol-based Helen Dunmore, writes Dan Gjaister. The story of a middle-class family in the run-up to the first world war, it deals with sensitive issues including incest. Reviewing the novel in the Guardian,

Marianne Brace described her as "an electrifying and original talent, a writer whose style is characterised by a lyrical, dreamy intensity." Dunmore, aged 43, married with a stepson, a son and a daughter, said that she had not been discouraged by the farrow surrounding the women-only prize. "I don't think the fact that women won the Whitbread and the Booker have affected what the Orange prize set out to do," she said. "We have a unique tradition of women's fiction in the English language. We

are very foolish if we don't celebrate the achievements of women's fiction." The Yorkshire-born Dunmore came to attention as a children's writer and as a poet. "I wouldn't define myself as a children's writer, a poet or a novelist because I want to feel that we can push the boundaries of what we are." "When I was 25, people said to me I was a poet," she said. "Now they say to me that I am a novelist. Maybe one day I will be a playwright." Her two earlier novels, Burning Bright and Zenner in Darkness, were both

highly praised. Her poetic style has been compared with Pat Barker and with Jeanette Winterson. Her poetry collections include the Sea Skater, which won the Poetry Society's Alice Hunt Bartlett Award. Asked how she planned to spend the £30,000 prize money, she said: "I suppose I shall spend it very easily," adding "People are always surprised when writers receive money, as if they don't have mortgages to pay." Dunmore has already completed her next novel, Talking To The Dead. It is to be published in July.

Doubts over legacy from 'abuser' actor

Charity uncertain over £240,000 bequest after daughter's claims

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

CHILDREN'S charity is reconsidering whether to accept a £240,000 bequest by the late comic actor Arthur Mullard, after claims yesterday that he abused his daughter. The charity, NCH Action for Children, has not yet received the money. It said the allegations had made the issue "more complicated". Mr Mullard, who died last December at the age of 85, achieved fame as a larger-than-life, affable cockney. But his daughter, Barbara Lucas,

"I don't want to live any more because of what you're doing with Barbara". Ms Lucas told the Daily Mail: "My father tore up that note in front of me. Only he and I knew about that note." A planned programme on Mr Mullard for the television series This Is Your Life was reportedly cancelled after the show's researchers spoke to Brian, his elder son. However, his other son, Johnny, said that there had been an argument over his money after which he had threatened to leave it all to charity. In the event, Mr Mullard left almost all his estate to NCH and £5,000 each to his younger son and Ms Lucas, a twice-married mother-of-four, who had nursed her father towards the end of his life despite her claimed

spite her claimed experiences. A spokeswoman for NCH, which works with abused children, said: "These allegations of sexual abuse have made this legacy a bit more complicated." "We will be looking at the issues involved to see whether we are going to accept the money or turn it down." Arthur Mullard appeared in more than 100 films, usually in the guise of a stochically cheery Cockney, and made numerous appearances on television in such shows as Celebrity Squares. His best known television role was in the comedy series Yes, My Dear, in which he played a henpecked gipsy who is a constant source of annoyance to his neighbours.



Arthur Mullard... 'drove wife to suicide'

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While British politics is about short-term gain and long-term savings, France basks in the consistent thread of strategy. The high-speed rail network and high-grade educational system for all from 3 to 18 are non-negotiable.

Jon Snow, page 9

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News in brief

'Ethnic neglect' in education

THE Commission for Racial Equality yesterday accused the Government of "lamentable neglect" for failing to take seriously a crisis of educational under-achievement by some ethnic groups.

Rail crash blamed on muddle

A FATAL rail crash on remote Pennine moorland is to be blamed on an internal muddle at Railtrack which led to radio warnings of a landslide going to the wrong train.

Channel 4 attacks critics

A SENIOR Channel 4 executive launched a fierce counter-attack last night against tabloid critics of the station's controversial output.

Army's 'unfit' recruits

THE army is to extend basic training for raw recruits from the traditional 10 weeks to 12 to allow unhealthy teenagers to reach required standards of physical fitness at a gentler pace.

Discrimination payouts up

AWARDS in sex discrimination cases have trebled since official limits on compensation were scrapped 2½ years ago, a report showed yesterday.

Life for 'merciless' killing

TWO men were jailed for life yesterday for shooting dead a father of three in an unprovoked street attack in March last year.

Bogus claims have become a target for organised criminals and may total £2 billion a year, say MPs

Gangs in benefit swindles

Consortium wins £1bn deal

AN ORGANISED consortium of criminals is swindling the state of millions of pounds a year in bogus housing benefit claims, prompting MPs to demand more high profile prosecutions and exemplary sentences for fraudsters.

Labour set to shake up the utilities

Labour's new anti-competition policy in which third parties can win interim court injunctions to stop restrictive practices pending an inquiry.

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ENGLISH Heritage has petitioned the House of Lords to amend the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill to include protection for the listed buildings at King's Cross, including the Victorian gasometers above, and Sir George Gilbert Scott's magnificent Gothic railway hotel, writes Mae Kennedy.

Tomorrow is the closing date for petitions to the Lords on the bill. St Pancras Chambers, the former Midland Grand Hotel, which has recently been partly restored using over £10 million in public money, is Grade I listed and would normally have the highest protection against unsympathetic alteration.

Labour set to shake up the utilities

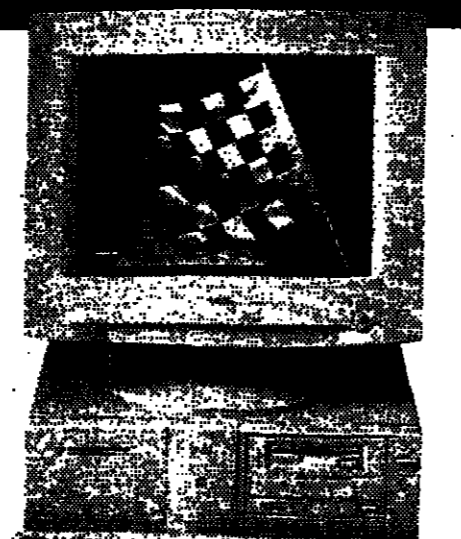
Labour's new anti-competition policy in which third parties can win interim court injunctions to stop restrictive practices pending an inquiry.

'For the first time the party fleshes out Blair's call for a stakeholding economy'

For the first time, the party fleshes out the bones of Tony Blair's call for a stakeholding economy, saying it would set up an expert panel on corporate governance to draw up a code of practice on stakeholding.

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Thursday, May 16 1996
In a year, say MPs
dles

The Guardian Thursday May 16 1996

Survey shows 80pc are in fear of losing their jobs

Millennium offers workers little joy

Gary Younge

THE average British worker of the year 2010 will be older, lonelier and feel less professionally secure as he fights a losing battle to balance job, family life and bank account, says a survey released yesterday.

The British workforce harbours a deep anxiety about how the millennium will affect working and personal lives, says the report, *Changing Work Patterns - A Crisis for the Millennium*, conducted by Mintel, the market research analysts.

Employment worries plague four-fifths of adults, with 21 per cent concerned about finding work and 19 per cent fearing loss of their job. Social and emotional worries are set to increase six-fold over the next 10 years, and loneliness will become a social issue with the increas-

ing number of single-person households," predicts the company's senior financial analyst, Paul Hersey.

More than a third of those in work claimed their social and family lives were being affected because they worked too many hours.

Only four in 10 adults are looking forward to the millennium, and the number of people happy with their standard of living has dropped by 16 per cent between 1990 and 1995. The young and single are more optimistic than the old and married, with those in London and Scotland maintaining the cheeriest outlook, and people in East Anglia and the Midlands the bleakest.

Eighty per cent accept that jobs for life no longer exist, but growing flexibility in the labour market has been accompanied by a resurgence in the demand for greater job security, with just under half saying they prefer greater security to more money.

"This suggests that the public is slowly recognising that economic risk is shifting away from the state and company to the individual," Mr Hersey says.

Some see their salvation in starting their own business, with one in five intending to do so within the next 10 years, most of them young men.

However as feminists have long been predicting, the future will be female, with more women entering the workforce, which, says Mintel, should have a beneficial knock-on effect for older workers.

The report's summary says that more better-educated career women will lead to a decline in the birth rate at a time when more people will be needed in the workplace. This will lead to a 28 per cent rise in 55 to 64-year-olds and a 22 per cent drop in those aged between 25 and 34.

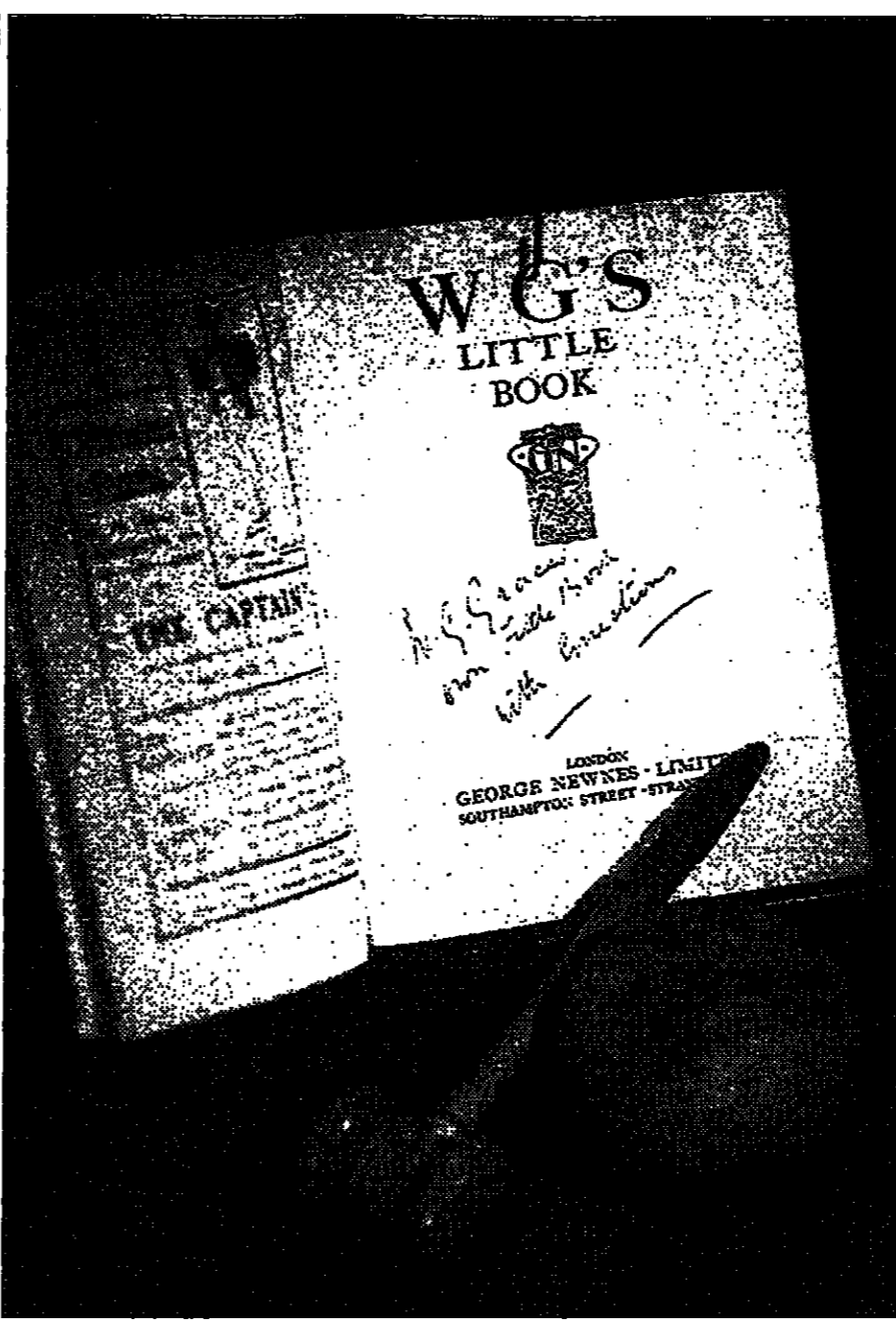
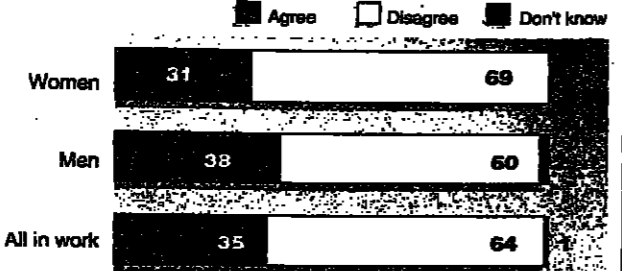
Mr Hersey believes these demographic changes will end the binge of "downsizing" that saw thousands of workers, particularly older ones, sacked in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

"I think there will be a far greater appreciation of experience and more commitment to retraining workers than getting rid of them and then having to train new ones," Mr Hersey says.

Within Mintel's crystal ball comes signs that many predictions from the past have proved hopelessly wide of the mark. Only a third of households will have a computer by the year 2000 and less than 3 per cent of the working population will work from home.

All work and no play...

I find I am having to work too many hours and this is affecting my social and family life. Base of 1,542 adults, percentage, 1996.



One of the volumes signed by its author to be auctioned on July 11, and (top right) W G Grace at the wicket, one of the photographs in the collection. MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: TIM CLIFF



W G Grace memorabilia sale presents unique slice of cricket history

A SLICE of cricketing history comes up for sale this summer when a collection of books once owned by the most famous name in the sport is auctioned in Devon, writes Geoffrey Gibbs.

The collection includes a set of bound Wisdens that belonged to the legendary Gloucestershire and England captain W G Grace, with cricketing books by and about him, and a number of photographs. Many of the books carry his signature.

Sale of the collection comes at a time of remarkable buoyancy in the market for such items.

Robin Barlow, of fine art auctioneers Bearne's, who are handling the sale, says the record £23,000 paid at

auktion last week for Sir Donald Bradman's bat reinforced the strong interest in cricketing memorabilia.

He said the sale in Exeter on July 11 was expected to attract international interest. But it was impossible to say what value might be put on the 150 cricketing volumes included in the auction. "Estimates are based on comparisons but this is unique," he said at the firm's Exeter salerooms yesterday.

Among the 116 lots is a rare complete set of the Wisdens from 1864, when the cricketing magazine was first published, until 1915, the year Grace died. All the volumes from 1864 until 1898 are signed.

Among the books up for auction are a signed copy of Grace's *Cricketing Reminiscences*, in which he confesses himself a reluctant writer.

"Writing is not a recreation I care for," admits the player who scored more than 54,900 runs and took 2,879 wickets during an illustrious career.

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Offenders to lose 'pom'

Howard to stop sex attackers retaining witness statements

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

PLANS for legislation to prevent sex offenders from using witness statements and photographs as a form of pornography were announced by the Home Secretary yesterday. Under the new rules, paedophiles and other sex offenders will no longer be allowed to keep sensitive material.

Michael Howard announced the move to 1,000 delegates at the Police Federation conference in Scarborough. "There has been a growing tendency for sex offenders in prison to swap or trade in explicit witness statements about rape and indecent assault. Such prisoners are allowed to retain all statements and photographic evidence relating to their cases. "Victims of sexual offences suffer appalling crimes," Mr Howard said. "Their distress

should not be made worse by defendants and their friends misusing victims' statements and photographs as a form of pornography."

Mr Howard stressed that defendants should be allowed to see all the evidence against them. "But for them to keep and misuse sensitive material is an affront to victims." It is believed that other witnesses may be deterred from coming forward in sex cases if they think that their evidence may be misused in this way.

Legislation on stalking and gun control was also promised by Mr Howard. Earlier a conference debate had been scathing about the Government's slow response to calls for legislative action on stalking. Alan Gordon, of Hampshire police, said that if Canada, Australia and 48 states in the US could draft adequate legislation on stalking it should be possible for the Government to do so too.

The chairman of the federa-

tion, Fred Broughton, told the conference that throughout the 1980s there had been a retreat from law and order. He said this had astounded the police as it had resulted from a party that came into office "on the back of the strongest law and order platform in electoral history."

But he congratulated Mr Howard on having brought about crucial changes in the rules of evidence so that criminal trials might become more of an inquiry into truth rather than "a farce played out for the benefit of the lawyers".

However Mr Broughton was critical of Mr Howard for accepting a recommendation to abolish a housing allowance for officers. "You delivered a major blow to our conditions of service," he said.

The conference also passed a motion calling for the federation to review its policy on gun control as a result of the Dunblane tragedy. Dave Jones, of Essex police, said that without changes in the gun laws the events of Dunblane could be repeated anywhere in Britain tomorrow.



than animals because an animal can roam when it is hungry.

September There is a big welt on my arm where I was whipped yesterday for falling asleep at the loom.

October The boss says we are behind on the carpet. We are too slow. So instead of starting at six we will start at four. And instead of stopping at eight we will stop at 11. Three boys are crying but I feel too tired to cry.

November A big commotion today. Nageshwar and his two younger brothers escaped.

December Nageshwar is back and we have been told that the same thing will happen to us if we try to escape. He has been branded with hot iron rods.

January I want to study, I want to be a teacher, and when I grow up I will earn money and help my father out of his debt. That's what I want to do, if I get out of here.

February I don't know why I am here. I think my Papa sold me to the boss to learn a trade and now the boss says I must do exactly what he tells me.

March It's the same every day. We go from our beds to the loom at six. No-one must talk. We tie tiny knots all day, the smallest ones on the carpet because we have small fingers. Work, work, work. My fingers crack and weep and sometimes my eyes get all blurred. We get a cup of dahl and half an hour to rest then go back to the loom till night time. There is no more food. We are too tired to play.

April Paro talked today and the boss lashed her with the cane. He shouted at us "if you children speak you are not giving your whole attention to the product."

May My fingers bled again and the boss got angry with me for getting blood on the loom. He says I will work extra hours for the next two days and I will be fined and that will increase my father's debt to him. I cried when he talked about Papa.

DIARY OF A SURVIVOR AGED 8 1/2

June The boy who lost a hand, poor Rangilal, he fainted today. We begged the boss to open the window. "The mud walls are hot sir. The thermometer says 105 sir." But the window stays shut to keep out the insects that eat the wool.

July Not much light gets through the polythene slats in the roof. It's hard to see the pattern. I made mistakes today and I'm frightened what will happen when the boss finds out.

August In bed tonight. Nageshwar told me his plan to escape. He is brave but he is bigger than me. He said we live worse

This diary is based on interviews with Madan Ram and other children recently working in carpet factories in Uttar Pradesh, India.

These children have been rehabilitated with the help of Christian Aid, but in India alone an estimated 15 million children still spend their entire childhoods slaving in bonded labour to help their parents out of debt.

Christian Aid works to fight child labour in countries throughout the Third World. We can't do this without your help. Please give all you can in Christian Aid Week.

Gummer takes action to save rare cabbage beetle

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

A BEETLE that lives on a species of cabbage so rare it is found only on a small island in the Bristol Channel may seem not to have much future - but the Lundy cabbage flea beetle has powerful friends.

One is John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, who has appointed the National Trust as guardian of the beetle's food supply, the Lundy cabbage, and thereby ensured the survival of the two-millimetre-long insect.

Mr Gummer is responsible for ensuring that the United Kingdom fulfils its international treaty obligations and looks after the diversity of animals, plants, and insects in Britain.

As part of the Biodiversity Action Plan he asked yesterday for organisations and companies to act as guardians for 150 species threatened by man's management of the countryside. Many of them, like the Lundy cabbage, are almost unknown, but some, like the dormouse, red squirrel and skylark, are celebrated in Victorian fairy tales and poetry but in 1996 are in danger of disappearing.

Mr Gummer made an impassioned plea for the skylark yesterday and then accepted that saving it as a common countryside bird would be difficult, since its rapid decline was due to intensive farming. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has agreed to help.

Other species are easier to save. The Lundy cabbage has been isolated on the island for at least 10,000 years and is part of the gene bank of the wild cabbage. If anything goes wrong with the domestic stock through excessive inbreeding, it will be a valuable resource.

The National Trust is to

limit the number of sheep on the mile-long island to give the cabbage a greater chance of survival.

The tiny Desmoulin's Whorl snail, one of the species on Mr Gummer's list, is at risk from the building of the Newbury bypass in Berkshire. Friends of the Earth

said yesterday, threatening legal action if a reserve were not set up or any part of the snail's habitat were excluded from it. A Department of Environment spokesman said the snail was also found at other sites, which might be better alternatives for preserving the species.

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Finance Guardian

China faces US clampdown

Clinton orders \$3bn sanctions

Martin Walker
in Washington

THE Clinton administration announced over \$3 billion in sanctions against China yesterday, a new US record in punitive trade restrictions. China responded swiftly with the threat of counter-sanctions that ranged from heavy duties on vegetable oils to telecommunications equipment and films. "China shall

on the domestic audio-visual market to combat intellectual property piracy, the root cause of the dispute. But China is also likely to continue with its deliberate courting of European companies like Airbus as a way of putting pressure on the US. The delegation of British businessmen being led to China next week by deputy prime minister Michael Heseltine can expect to be prominent beneficiaries of the Chinese determination to show the US that it has alternative trading partners. The last US-China row saw Beijing ordering Airbus aircraft from France and telecommunications and generating equipment from Germany. The White House is steeling itself in an election year, to shake off its reputation for ap-

peasing the Beijing regime. Trade rows are but one aspect of a complex strategic relationship across the Pacific, in which nuclear proliferation and Chinese threats to Taiwan and security issues all play a part. Moreover, China's usual reliance on the lobbying efforts of US corporations now runs up against two very powerful US business lobbies which claim that China is cheating. While Boeing, General Electric, Chrysler and other traditional big corporations want to continue business as usual with China, both Hollywood and Silicon Valley have had enough. The main issue is Chinese piracy of US computer software, CD-ROMs and CD music and audio tapes, videos and movies and books and trade marked items. These make up the copyright industry, worth \$50 billion a year to the US, 8 per cent of GDP and employing 5 per cent of the workforce, as much as the entire auto industry. Moreover, the export industries of Hollywood and Silicon Valley are growing three times faster than the rest of the economy, and while traditional industry tends to lean to the Republicans, these newer and trendier industries are particularly close to President Clinton. There is no doubting the determination of Charlene Barshefsky, the acting US Trade Representative, to go ahead with the sanctions, which are targeted mainly at Chinese exports of textiles and clothing and consumer electronics. She said she felt betrayed

Birmingham Notebook

A tale of mutual destruction



Alex Brummer

THE building society movement, presently holding its annual conference in Birmingham, is a shadow of its former self. While the Treasury has dabbled over reform legislation, the structure, confidence and objectives of a movement — with its roots firmly planted in the traditions of Victorian prudence — have been despoiled and distorted. Societies which not so long ago attended these annual conferences in a spirit of goodwill competition, are now at each other's throats. The biggest losers from the upheaval, engendered by a Government without vision and direction on competition policy in general and in the financial services sector in particular, are savers and housebuyers. Savers because they are now being offered paltry rates of return — in some cases less than the low rate of inflation — and future housebuyers who will be deprived of choice. Of course, the building society movement has not been an innocent bystander. Several societies were so busy being having like banks, particularly when it came to repossessing properties and rewarding executives, that they came to believe the propaganda that conversion to a plc or absorption by one of the financial monoliths was the only way forward. Moreover, those societies which determinedly wished to remain mutuals waited far too long before coming up with the satisfactory loyalty bonuses — such as higher rates of return on savings or cheaper mortgages. Yet many societies might have remained mutuals had the climate been different, but were pushed over the edge by government inaction. They have been required to operate in a legislative framework which put mutuals at a financial and regulatory disadvantage to the banking sector, with its access to wholesale money markets, its freedoms in bancassurance and more flexible regulatory regime. In addition, the Government did nothing to protect societies from the menace of speculative financial flows — in the hope of cash bonuses.

Compare this to the UK banking sector where our largest domestic bank, NatWest, has recently announced that in order to be more efficient it must shed 15,000 jobs, close 350 branches and make a dash for new technologies. The back offices which the clearing banks are now seeking to eliminate have been gone from the building societies for nearly a decade. The largest society, the Halifax, was a pioneer in this area. And the Alliance and Leicester has recently revamped its information systems to allow almost everyone in the enterprise access. It is the building societies, freed partly from paying out ever-increasing dividends, which have been able to find the enormous sums of money needed for the most modern technologies, while some banks have scarcely left the 19th century.

BUILDING society members have been tempted to vote for conversions and takeovers by cash and share bribes. The financial press has played its role in building up the hysteria, which has made members of the public believe that an instant access account is the equivalent of a lottery win. But there is no free ride. Members of the Halifax/Leeds, who learnt of merger and conversion in November 1994, were not to be paid until at least Spring 1997 for their payouts. Meanwhile, as data in the Bank of England's May 1996 Inflation Report shows, borrowers and savers in those societies which have chosen to stay mutual, are benefiting from lower mortgage costs and stronger savings. The converting societies have chosen to preserve spreads, that is the profit they make from relending cheaply obtained deposits at higher rates at the customer's expense.

The rub, however, is that the banks — which are being swelled by the merging and converting building societies — are unable to effectively compete without squeezing spreads from the large numbers of genuine small savers to building societies which were founded precisely to serve their needs. Or, in the case of societies which are converting, to all but require savers to hang on for interest rate returns which, frankly, are insulting. The present return on an instant access account is 2.45 per cent before tax, a negative real return. The ironic aspect of the destruction of the building society movement (by the time

C&W makes wrong call

Nicholas Bannister
Technology Editor

FRESH doubts surround the future of Cable & Wireless after its announcement of a new, highly paid, chief executive and a renewed commitment to existing policies failed to capture the City's imagination. C&W announced yesterday that Dick Brown, the president and chief executive of H&R Block, the largest American tax group, will take over as chief executive in July, on a salary of \$650,000 a year. Mr Brown, who oversaw Block's flotation of its on-line information service, ComputerServe, previously worked for US telecom groups Ameritech and Sprint before joining Block in August last year. C&W chairman, Brian Smith, said that Mr Brown would help plug the US gap in the group's worldwide operations and oversee a return to the strategy of expansion through joint ventures. The news disappointed the City which had been expecting a more radical appointment following C&W's lacklustre performance in recent years and its failed merger talks with British Telecom. The group's shares ended the day 5p down at 46p.

Mr Brown will be entitled to a bonus worth up to 100 per cent of his basic salary if C&W's real earnings per share grow by 15 per cent a year for three years. He will also be granted share options worth £2.6 million when he joins in July. These can be cashed in after three years but only if real earnings per share have risen by 6 per cent over the period. Rod Olsen, who took over as acting chief executive following the abrupt departure of chairman Lord Young, said that Mr Brown would be appointed deputy chief executive, with special responsibility for developing business in the Asia Pacific region. A new finance director is to be appointed shortly. C&W wants to expand its existing US business so that it can offer the whole range of telecom services required by multi-national companies and compete with Connet, a joint venture owned by British Telecom and its American partner MCI, and with Global One, the joint venture between Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom and Sprint.



New deal... Donning the red uniform of Virgin Airlines, Lisa Leeson was at Gatwick yesterday to begin training as an £8,000-a-year plus allowances flight attendant. She will eventually qualify for free flights to visit husband Nick, the jailed ex-Barings trader, in Singapore. PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON KRETEIM

City disturbed by wage-rise threat to inflation target

Sarah Ryle

THE City took fright at new evidence that wage increases are unexpectedly beginning to take off, renewing fears that the Government's tough inflation target is under threat. Despite a relatively modest rise in earnings growth to 3.75 per cent in March, the increase was enough to weaken glits and short sterling, as the markets assumed a higher probability that interest rates will rise from 6 per cent. As official unemployment fell by 3,200 to 2,183,500 in April, its lowest level for five years, new earnings data reignited concern that the economic recovery, led by consumer spending, could need

Mortgage of the future to be priced in euro

Teresa Hunter

BRITAIN'S biggest mortgage lenders are planning to overhaul the traditional home loan ahead of a single European currency with the launch of euro mortgages. Lending giants have put detailed plans in place for financial life in Britain after 1999, when they believe European currencies will join in a single currency — the euro — with the UK forced to accompany them within a few years. The building societies have produced blueprints for euro savings accounts, passbooks and cash-dispensers despite the Government's increasingly Eurosceptical tone. A Halifax spokesman said: "Our view is that a single European currency will happen and that the UK will be brought in within two or three years. This will mean substantial changes for our products, the housing market and the economy, as a whole.

With 99.9 per cent of our assets in sterling we have to look forward and be prepared." Bradford and Bingley's plans for a euro mortgage are already at an advanced stage, and will be launched ahead of the UK's participation in single currency. Bradford and Bingley's chief executive Geoffrey Lister said: "We believe euro mortgages will offer lower interest rates than sterling mortgages to UK mortgagees. We could even reach the stage where Britain remains outside the currency alignment but employees ask to be paid in euro." A Nationwide spokesman however said that it was important mortgage lenders did not get ahead of the political agenda. "This is a sensitive issue which we cannot ignore. But we have to respond to political progress." OFT director general John Ridgman yesterday welcomed the competition in the battle for survival between mutual societies and the banks which are owned by shareholders. He said that competition was always in the customer's best interest — but the OFT had no preference. Service to customers was paramount. His remarks came as Birmingham MidShires chief executive Mike Jackson, dismissed speculation that his society was vulnerable to a takeover by the Prudential or another financial institution, or that it was poised to merge with the Woolwich. He said it had received no approach from any organisation since 1990. The Woolwich yesterday announced the appointment of a new finance director Robert Jeans, formerly group finance director of Kleinwort Benson, who will replace Michael Duke when he retires next year. However, the Woolwich said it was still no nearer to appointing a new chief executive to replace Peter Robinson who resigned after allegations over expenses claims.

CTR draws up last chance plan to contain £461m debts

Roger Cowe

CENTRAL Trailer Rentals, the former Tip-hook container company which hit a financial crisis two years ago, last night revealed details of a financial restructuring to underpin its continued operations and reduce £461 million debt. The plan includes a swap of debt for equity by banks, which would leave existing shareholders with only 15 per cent of the company. But the directors warned that failure to approve the package would almost certainly result in liquidation. Even assuming the reconstruction is approved, the group's future remains difficult. Trading over the past six months has been disappointing, especially in the UK where the usual Christmas peak failed to materialise. The directors are confident of having adequate finances for the next 18 months, but can make no forecasts beyond that point. Following the deal with the banks and other lenders who have continued to support the company, finance director Richard Raine will leave. He will be replaced by David Howell, an accountant and former chief executive of a telecoms services company. It is also intended to recruit a full-time chief executive, allowing Ian Clubb to relinquish that role and return to his position as non-executive chairman. Existing loan notes will be swapped for new notes and shares, while new bank finance will be replaced by a mixture of shares and new loans. Frozen funds will also be released, and CTR also plans to sell its rail divisions, raising an expected £10 million.

Watchdog lets insurers off the Serps hook

Ian Wylie

INSURERS will not be forced to compensate up to £38,000 people who may have been wrongly advised to leave the state earnings-related pension scheme (Serps). A report published yesterday by the chief City watchdog, the Securities and Investment Board, says there is no evidence of systematic mis-selling of personal pensions to people opting out of Serps. Since 1996, employees have been allowed to contract out of Serps and have some of their National Insurance contributions directed into a "rebate" personal pension. More than five million people have opted out of Serps in the past eight years, but research by actuaries Alexander Clay and Coopers & Lybrand suggests only 4 per cent stand to lose out, with average losses just £78 a year. At £38 million, the figure for total losses falls far short of the estimated £2 billion compensation bill faced by insurers who advised people to opt out of occupational schemes. However, most of the losses have been incurred by young, low-paid employees who have drifted in and out of employment and been unable to build up a personal fund. The report says flat-rate charges levied by some insurers have taken too large a chunk of low-value funds. SIB chairman Andrew Large said the losses incurred were too small to justify compulsory remedial action by pension providers, but he warned that the regulator would consider publishing details of pension providers who did not take steps to reduce the impact of fixed charges on low-value funds. The pensions arms of Barclays, Midland, NatWest, Abbey National and Royal Bank of Scotland announced they would scrap flat-rate administration charges.

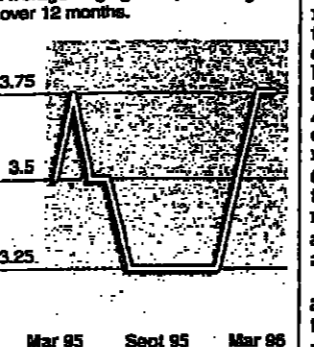
BBC 'puts jobs in Wales at risk'

Geoffrey Gibbs

FEAR that South Wales could lose out on a £1 billion hi-tech inward investment because of premature publicity has provoked a furious row between the BBC and the Welsh Office. Reports that Lucky Goldstar, one of Korea's largest electronics groups, was about to announce plans to build a silicon chip plant and create 4,000 jobs in Newport led the main television news bulletin on Friday and featured prominently on news and business programmes at the weekend. The reports — which said the announcement would be made at the beginning of this week — threw the Welsh Office into a state of apoplexy.

Negotiations on bringing the huge inward investment to Wales remain at a delicate stage and officials feared the news coverage might be interpreted as trying to force Goldstar's hand in favour of Wales rather than rival locations in Scotland, Ireland and North-east England. It is understood that officials sought to persuade the BBC that the deal had not been clinched and that the reports might damage Newport's chances of securing the investment. Frantic efforts were made by the Welsh Office and the Welsh Development Agency over the weekend to placate the Korean company and assure it the reports had not come from a Government source.

Wage change



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Canada 2.0225	Hong Kong 11.42	New Zealand 2.14	Sweden 10.05
Cyprus 0.9550	India 52.84	Norway 9.71	Switzerland 1.8275
Denmark 8.73	Ireland 1.9425	Portugal 2.2225	Turkey 12.041
Finland 7.1125	Israel 4.88	Saudi Arabia 5.85	USA 1.48

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel)

Bid plans are put on hold until after next election

PowerGen renews attack on Lang

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

POWERGEN, the electricity generator thwarted by the Government in its attempt to buy Midlands Electricity, yesterday made a fresh attack on the Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, and said it still wanted to buy a regional electricity company.

Utilities would eventually emerge to dominate the privatised electricity market, despite Mr Lang's decision to override Monopolies Commission recommendations and block the Midlands bid and a similar pitch by National Power for Southern Electric.

12 per cent share of the generation market by next April - when PowerGen's share will have fallen to 20 per cent - PowerGen has sought clarification from Professor Littlechild. One option open to the group is to appeal to the Office of Fair Trading if it fails to gain sufficient success.

News in brief

£250m city centre plan for Birmingham

A £250 million plan to redevelop a large area of Birmingham's city centre has been agreed by the property group Land Securities and the Australian insurance company AMP, which owns Pearl Assurance. The scheme covers the Martineau Square and Priory Square shopping centres and an adjacent office block in a 10-acre site bounded by Corporation Street, High Street and Union Street. It is next to Masshouse Circus, where Birmingham council plans to create Millennium Point as a focus for the regeneration of Digbeth. — Roger Coote

Watchdog's gas challenge

OPGAS is to ask British Gas to explain its warning that 10,000 jobs might be lost if the company implemented new pricing rules issued by the industry watchdog earlier this week. Claire Spottiswoode, Ogas director-general, is to write to British Gas chairman, Richard Giordano, seeking an explanation. A British Gas spokesman said: "The (company) figures were based on careful analysis of the Ogas documentation. We stand by them."

Larger slice for rail investors

THE Government plans to give small investors a larger slice of Railtrack after more than 500,000 people applied to buy shares in the state-owned operator of Britain's rail infrastructure. The public offer will be more than twice subscribed, meaning that the Government will offer small investors more than 30 per cent of Railtrack's shares. — Bloomberg

£57m profit for Greenalls

GREENALLS, the Cheshire-based drinks and hotels group, announced first-half pre-tax profits of £57 million, a 44 per cent increase. Greenalls, owner of around 2,300 pubs, which was admitted to the FTSE-100 earlier this year, said the acquisition of the Boddington pub chain for £498 million had contributed £13.3 million to profits, while integration of the former Boddington businesses is likely to be completed within the next fortnight, producing £18 million of savings. The shares closed down 20 1/2 p, at 580 1/2 p, on profit-taking. — Ian King

Free tickets on Eurostar

FREE standard return tickets are being offered on Eurostar services from now until the end of the year by the consortium, headed by Richard Branson, which has taken over the running of the three-hour rail trip from London to Paris. The value of the ticket is £99 upwards but, to qualify, passengers must have first purchased a £220 first-class return. Eurostar aims to break even within two years and to raise passenger usage from 3 million to more than 10 million. — Keith Harper

Cable firm's loss

BRITAIN'S largest cable company, TeleWest, turned in a net loss of £53.4 million during the first quarter compared with £17.7 million for the same period last year. The group acquired SBS CableComms in October last year. — Nicholas Barnister

Underside

Roger Cowe

OF COURSE Germans have a sense of humour, but can they get their facts straight? The chief executive of Siemens, Jürgen Gehrke, encouraged by the presence of European Commission President Jacques Delors and the wacky atmosphere at this week's German-British Chamber of Commerce and Industry lunch, chortled: "We were pleased to see the Euroceptics suffer a setback this weekend when a Frenchman lifted the FA Cup supported by a German." Except, of course, that there are no Germans playing for Manchester United. Peter Schmeichel hails from Denmark, where the population had to be leached on twice before they opted for European Union. But then, some Germans have always thought of Denmark as more German than Scandinavian.

Eurovision Song Contest last year. The Norwegian sponsors of this year's contest are keen to extol the virtues of Norwegian business. For example, Norwegian salmon production costs have halved in the last decade; and Hardanger is the world's most northerly fruit-growing region — thanks to monks from York. Even more interesting, many Japanese marriages are apparently kept going by ground reindeer antlers, regarded as an aphrodisiac. Come back Dasa.

ELSEWHERE in Scandinavia, or is it Germany, Norwegians are still trying to obliterate the memory of "null points" even though they won the

Dasa sale falls through

Mark Milner

DAIMLER Benz aerospace division, Dasa, yesterday revealed that it has abandoned its efforts to sell its MTU subsidiary to rival aero-engine maker, BMW Rolls-Royce.

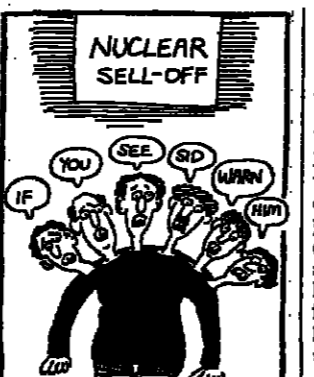
One stumbling block in the way of a deal was the competition between Rolls-Royce and the US engine manufacturer, Pratt & Whitney, MTU's partner in some areas of its civil business.

The sale of MTU München to BMW that has been under discussion for some time will not take place," Rainer Herrlich, MTU's president, said in Berlin yesterday.

Dasa now intends to keep the aero-engine company and is aiming to see the loss-making subsidiary break even by 1998 at the latest. That is expected to mean a programme of cost-cutting and workforce reduction.

According to a Dasa spokesman, selling MTU to the BMW Rolls-Royce joint venture would have meant MTU selling valuable parts of the operation while the possibility of its taking on a role of sub-contractor to the rival concern also founded on competition concerns. "We will stay as we are. We will continue a policy of being a risk-and-reward-sharing partner on engine programmes that make economic sense."

Rolls-Royce yesterday acknowledged the industrial logic of putting MTU together with its own joint venture but also accepted the difficulties.



THE curse of Doctor Death continues. It seemed just an unhappy coincidence when Lord Owen, fresh from his years as a peace envoy in the Labour Party, the SDP and Yugoslavia, became a non-executive director of Coats Viyella in September 1994, on the same day that the company was dumped out of the FTSE-100 index.

But sadly for Coats, his cure shows no sign of disappearing. Chairman Sir David Alliance delivered a profits warning on Tuesday along with his statement at the annual meeting. The news comes less than a month after the company's controversial announcement that it was cutting



Outrage ... a demonstrator "hangs" himself to protest at Shell's involvement with Nigeria PHOTOGRAPH BY GRAHAM TURNER

Orphans in search of their true home

Commercial Union steps into controversy over surplus funds by admitting it has £1bn in the pot, reports Pauline Springett

COMMERCIAL Union yesterday fuelled the debate on the ownership of surplus funds when it revealed that its so-called orphan estate contained around £1 billion.

The announcement came as CU, the UK's largest insurer, unveiled a slump in its first quarter profits. Pre-tax profits were £106 million, compared to £112 million last year. Like rival General Accident this week, CU blamed the decline on higher claims from bad weather in the UK and North America.

Peter Foster, CU's finance director, said that the group's orphan estate was roughly the same size as that of GA's and added that CU also had no plans to distribute its orphan fund in the short term. Both companies insist that the surpluses help to bolster financial strength and are already benefiting shareholders and policyholders.

Orphan funds are so called because they are surpluses whose ownership is uncertain. They can arise in various ways but a common reason for their existence is that insurers have made cautious payments to their policyholders. The debate centres on whether they are owned by shareholders or with-profits policyholders.

A host of insurers are at various stages of talks with the Department of Trade and Industry over the allocation of their orphan funds. The UK's total orphan funds have been estimated at £26 billion to £40 billion, although Roman Glady, an insurance analyst at brokers Merrill Lynch, said he believed it would be more accurate to put it at £10 billion.

He explained that this was partly because the original estimates now appeared overdone but also because surplus funds of mutual insurers

could not strictly be called orphan since they were clearly owned by policyholders as mutuals have no shareholders.

Orphan estates became an issue in the early 1990s. Both London and Manchester and United Friendly agreed with the DTI that £108 million and £290 million respectively could be attributed to shareholders. Neither sum was paid out. Instead they were

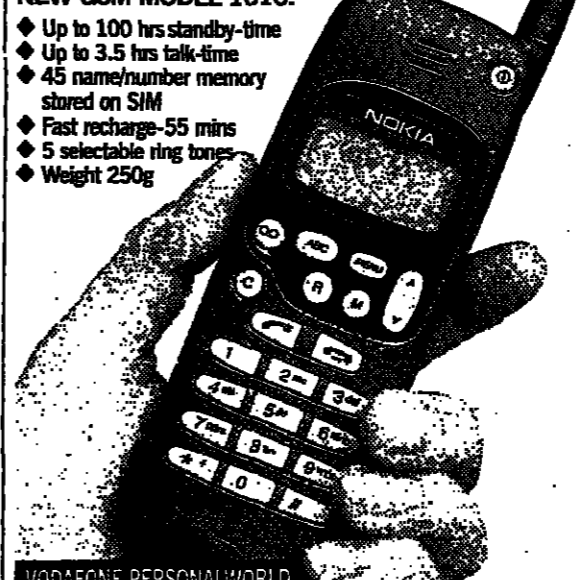
reallocated to the shareholders fund for which they now earn interest. United Friendly also gave its with-profits policyholders a special bonus. Since then Refuge Assurance, Britannic Assurance and Prudential have all said they are in talks with the DTI about their orphan funds. Refuge is believed to have an orphan estate worth about £350 million, while Britannic's could be around

£1.5 billion. A decision on the allocation of both of these funds is expected at any time by the City. But the main interest surrounds the Prudential, estimated to have an orphan fund of up to £5 billion. These talks are not expected to end for at least another year. When they do, the City expects a bonus for the with-profits policyholders, plus a windfall gain for shareholders.

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Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including "Kelle ace i", "Work with", and various small notices and advertisements.

Racing

Kelleyway holds Derby ace in Glory Of Dancer

Nash House taken out of betting after poor show in the Dante. Graham Rock reports

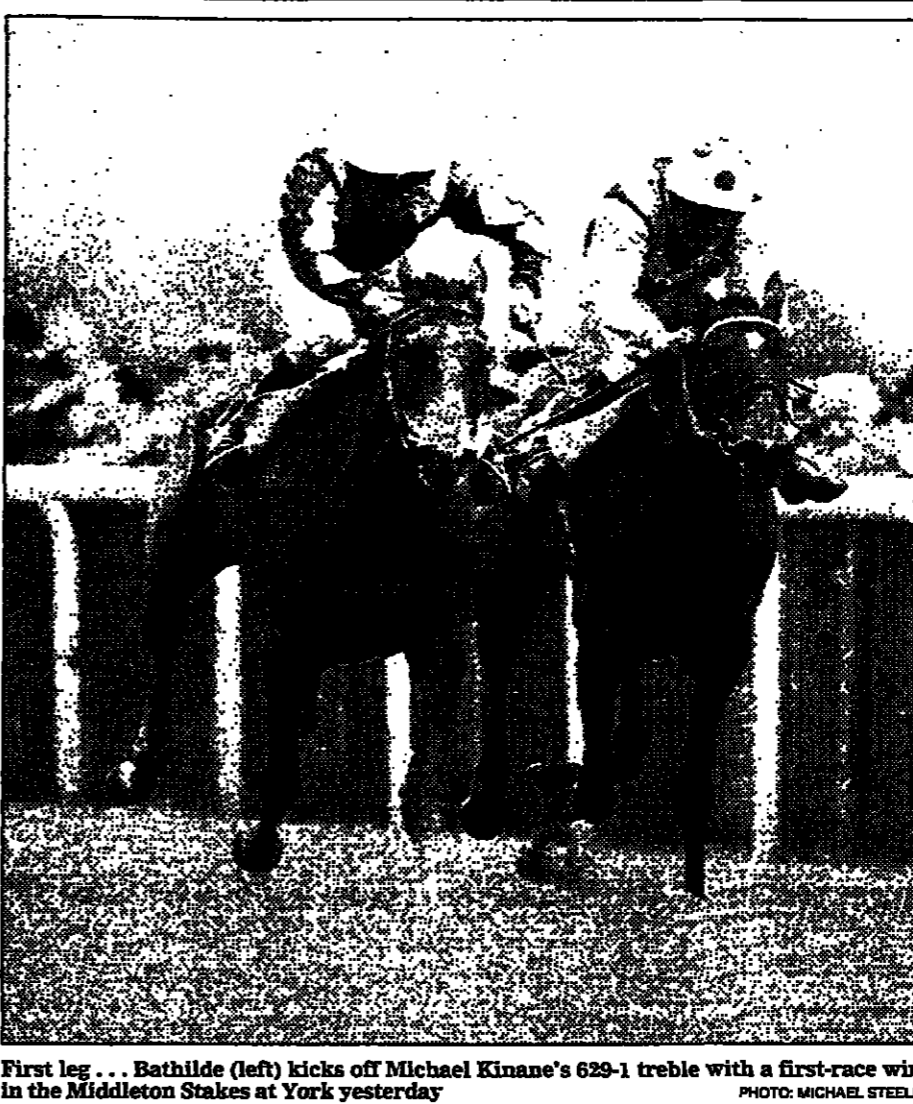
GLORY OF DANCER and Olivier Peslier won a muddling race for the Homeowners Mecca Dante Stakes at York yesterday, beating Dushyantor half a length. Paul Kelleyway's 11-year-old...

Felder, who was Italian owned. It takes a good horse to come from last to first," said Kelleyway. While he has earned the nickname "Pattern Race Paul" for tilting at equine windmills more often than seemed...

They don't deal in many cards, but this one is an ace," he said. "It's not just the horse, neither Kelleyway nor Peslier has any doubts about Glory Of Dancer staying a mile and a half, but there is plenty of speed on the dam's side of his pedigree and yesterday's race provided an insufficient test of stamina to be conclusive.

Cecil was pleased with Dushyantor. "He has come on a lot from last time, and will come on again," he said. "They didn't go fast enough for him today."

Michael Kinane spent most of the race boxed in on the rails aboard Storm Trooper. He reported that he would have gone close if he had made ground, but they chose Nash House, who drifted dramatically in the pre-race betting, showed good speed to reach the leaders, but tired in the final furlong and finished distressed. He has been taken out of the Derby betting.



First leg... Bathilde (left) kicks off Michael Kinane's 629-1 treble with a first-race win in the Middleton Stakes at York yesterday. PHOTO: MICHAEL STEELE

O'Brien faces Hotel inquiry

ADAM O'BRIEN, the record-breaking Irish trainer, faces charges of acting in a manner prejudicial to the integrity, proper conduct or good reputation of British racing at a Jockey Club inquiry today.

O'Brien, 26, who has broken all records in Ireland since taking out a licence in 1992, was referred to the disciplinary committee at Portman Square by the Cheltenham stewards after his withdrawal of Hotel Minella from the Coral Cup at the festival meeting.

The gelding finished ninth in the Champion Hurdle on the opening day of the festival and was pulled out of the following day's Coral Cup on the morning of the race.

Hotel Minella's declaration under top-weight for the £40,000-added handicap stopped the weights rising at the overnight stage and left 15 of the 23 runners out of the handicap proper, prompting suggestions - which O'Brien strenuously denied - that he had been left in to benefit others at the top of the weights.

York with TV form

Table listing race numbers, times, and names of horses and jockeys for various races at York.

Channel 4

Table listing race numbers, times, and names of horses and jockeys for Channel 4 races.

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Salisbury runners and riders

Table listing race numbers, times, and names of horses and jockeys for various races at Salisbury.

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Folkestone (N.H.) tonight

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Advertisement for Nokia power! mobile phones. The ad features the Nokia logo and the slogan 'Nokia power!' in large, bold letters. It also includes promotional text like 'FREE 50 MINUTE CALLS' and 'LIMITED OFFER £9.99'. The background is dark with some technical-looking graphics.

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS

First Division
Stoke 0, Leicester 1
(agg: 0-1)

Parker
chills
Stoke
fire

Ian Ross

GABRY PARKER'S 46th-minute goal was sufficient to move Leicester to within touching distance of a return to the Premiership, though Crystal Palace might put up a more convincing argument than did Stoke City last night.

The Victoria Ground positively vibrates on occasions such as these. The play-off was a much-magnified institution but there was a touch of magic in the cold night air.

The opening exchanges were unbearably frantic. The football gushed rather than flowed, the tackles were harsh and unsympathetic, the penalty appeals came and went regularly.

There was no rhythm, no discernible pattern and yet from the chaos emerged a game of great intensity if rather dubious quality.

Stoke's football is an interesting hybrid of intelligent tactics and frantic endeavour. They swarm like angry wasps irrespective of whether or not they are enjoying possession. It is a compelling sight if one which hints at desperation.

Leicester's approach is altogether more subtle. They pass the ball effortlessly and it is only an inability to accept what is presented to them on a plate which leaves them wanting.

The play was almost exclusively confined to midfield, and a first half of much effort was remarkable — almost memorable — simply because it did not yield even one chance of any merit.

The tireless running of Leicester's Claridge often threatened to bring to an end an uneasy stalemate. But even he was not guilty of trying to reach his intended target by way of a hidden tunnel when the front door was clearly open.

Leicester's supremacy clearly warranted a goal and it duly came when they caught Stoke cold as the second half opened. Barely 30 seconds had elapsed when the combined efforts of Heskey and Taylor untinged the home defence.

Taylor's cross from the byline was far from perfect but it was met by Parker who sent a thunderous rising volley just inside the ditch of post and crossbar.

Stoke City: Prudhoe, Clarkson, Shugart, White, Sandford, Devlin, Pottier, Garbutt, Hines, Wallace, Gleeson, Sheron, Shurridge.

Leicester City: Pople, Grayson, Walls, Walker, Pople, Lennon, Taylor, Parker, Heskey, Claridge. Referee: G Singh (Birmingham).

Third Division
Plymouth Argyle 3, Colchester 1 (agg: 3-2)

Williams blows late bubble as Argyle savour home fizz

Over 3 million flag waving supporters



Perfect start... Ray Houghton gives Crystal Palace a third-minute lead at Selhurst Park last night

Crystal Palace 1, Charlton Athletic 0 (agg: 3-1)
Palace upwardly mobile again

Robert Pryce
YO-YO, and thrice yo. Crystal Palace, who have been up and down in the past two seasons, are most likely on their way up again.

Last night they showed resilience if not overwhelming brilliance in completing their semi-final play-off victory over Charlton, earning them a trip to Wembley on Monday week.

Palace were the champions last time they won promotion, two years ago, yet lost their first game at home did not win a match until October and finished second from bottom.

Palace were the champions last time they won promotion, two years ago, yet lost their first game at home did not win a match until October and finished second from bottom.

rowed in the interim. But they may be the play-off team best equipped to survive in the Premiership. They have a £2 million sweeper, a goalkeeper who has played for England and several others who look capable of achieving coherence in Europe's most demanding league.

If their defence proves solid enough — they need a left-sided wing-back, but then so do Liverpool — they could win a few games with their swift counter-attacking.

Ray Houghton, who remains their most accomplished midfielder, is 34, which is not necessarily a disadvantage. Last night he looked the steadiest of steady influences and his eye for

his shot into the far top corner. Then Palace conceded this early initiative. Though they continued to threaten on the counter they spent much of the rest of the half absorbing pressure.

The first shot from nine yards out, bounced back off Martyn and Palace survived at the cost of an undignified scramble. A quarter of an hour later Martyn was scrambling again after a mix-up with Quinn. Robinson hit a first-time cross from the left, Leaburn headed down

towards the far corner and Tuttle cleared off the line. After a Buster Bloodvessel lookalike had surprised the players and amused the crowd with a celebratory streak early in the second half, David Whyte briefly delighted the visiting supporters by putting a shot past Martyn, but the linesman had already signalled offside. Palace were still doing an uncomfortably large share of the defending but Tuttle dealt with the most insistent alarm by heading over his own bar.

Second Division: Notts County 1, Crewe Alexandra 0 (agg: 3-2)
Martindale caps County's comeback

Michael Walker
NOTTS COUNTY'S optimistic plans to regain their First Division status on the rebound after last season's relegation came a step closer to reality at Meadow Lane last night.

A tremendous goal from the tireless Gary Martindale sent County through to Wembley, where they will meet Bradford City on Sunday week, and doomed Crewe Alexandra

to their third failure in three in the play-offs. Crewe's starting line-up lacked four of those from Sunday's 2-2 draw at Gresty Road including their scorers Little and Rivers, though the latter was on the bench. Initially the disruption did not show.

In a clean, fast opening County's only efforts of note came via a dangerous cross from Fimman, the man who had started their comeback in the first leg, and a weak long-range shot from Martindale.

at a low side-footer from Rogers. Crewe had by now been reduced to high, wide and ugly punts from Macauley and Adebola. But whatever was said at half-time seemed Ward into his first serious action.

But at the other end Gayle was soon back in business arching backwards to claw away a flicked header from Martindale.

Souness fights back in Turkey

GRAEME SOUNESS has bitten back at Galatasaray after being sacked by the Turkish Cup winners last week.

He has appealed to the world governing body Fifa, saying he was fired improperly and claiming that in March his contract was automatically extended for another year.

Results

Table listing various sports results including Soccer, Baseball, Basketball, Cricket, and Tennis.

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston 4, California 3 (in 12); Cleveland 5, Detroit 1; NY Yankees 6, Toronto 2; Baltimore 6, Oakland 1.

Basketball

NBA PLAY-OFFS: Eastern Conference: Chicago 94, New York 91; Western Conference: Los Angeles 101, Utah 87.

Cricket

SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP: Gloucestershire 214 and 219-5 (D County 100), Essex 274-7 (D Fothergill 100), Devon 141 (D Gifford 50), Durham 100 (D Gifford 50), Lancashire 154 (D Green 50) and 300-4 (D A Radford 100), Leicestershire 120 (D Gifford 50), Middlesex 120 (D Gifford 50), Warwickshire 120 (D Gifford 50), Yorkshire 120 (D Gifford 50).

Rush to say 'Non' to the French

WILKINSON'S clear-out of players he deems surplus to requirements began in earnest yesterday when the Northern Ireland international defender Nigel Worthington was given a free transfer.

Rush's decision to join Leeds will disappoint a host of clubs, notably Sheffield United, who have offered him the chance to become assistant to their manager Howard Kendall, a long-time friend of the Welsh striker.

Although the 34-year-old Welshman has ignored overtures from several leading European clubs since returning to Liverpool after a brief spell in Italy with Juventus eight years ago, he courteously agreed to listen to Marseille's proposals.

But even the chance to earn a small fortune in pleasant surroundings is unlikely to overturn his preference for a move across the Pennines. He is likely to sign a two-year deal and will begin the transformation from player to coach during his time at Elland Road.

Leeds's Howard Wilkinson was one of several managers to contact Rush two months ago when the striker announced that his 16-year love affair with the Merseyside club was definitely to end this summer.

After a season which brought humiliation at the hands of Aston Villa in the Coca-Cola Cup final and a worrying brush with relegation on an end-of-season holiday in Cyprus, this [behaviour] sums up anything but certain.

However, his response to the crisis has been typically robust and he will regard the signing of a player of Rush's pedigree and ability as something more than

Hodde given private view of England

DAVID LACEY says it was no accident that Venables' heir was at Bisham yesterday

WHILE the media's back was forcibly turned, Glenn Hodde yesterday had a sneak preview of the England squad that will soon be his. Hodde, who will take over from Terry Venables as England coach after the European Championship, looked in on a closed training session at Bisham Abbey.

His unscheduled appearance followed growing criticism of the way the Football Association had apparently gone out of its way to ensure that he was kept at arm's length from the England players during Euro 96. Yesterday he did no more than watch an hour and three-quarters' practice from afar.

It was no accident that he turned up at Bisham on the day Venables and his squad had to themselves during the preparations for Saturday's friendly against Hungary at Wembley. In fact he was the first to arrive, driving in 10 minutes before the team bus.

He watched the training session sitting on a fencepost, arms folded and eyes shielded by sunglasses. After it was over he talked briefly with Les Ferdinand and Sol Campbell and shook hands with Teddy Sheringham, but refused to talk to a solitary reporter as he left.

"Glenn came to look at the Bisham Abbey set-up," an FA spokesman said later. "It was a look-and-learn exercise, a chance to see how everything works. Terry was fully aware that he was coming and fully supportive, and he invited him back to the team hotel for lunch with the squad."

Sport in brief

Golf: Yorkshire's Ryder Cup player Mark James will replace the ailing Jose-Maria Olazabal at the Oxfordshire next Monday in the European qualifier for the £2.4 million Andersen Consulting World Championship. The current European No. 1 Ian Woosnam declined the place "because I don't want to be away from home around the New Year". The four-man finals will be held in Arizona on January 4-5.

Hockey: Lauren Williams, a Wales Under-21 defender and eldest daughter of the rugby union legend JPR Williams, wins full international selection for Wales against Italy in Rome on May 30 and June 2. Williams is among the eight who enter today's quarter-final knock-out. His rivals include Peter Gilmore of Australia and Russell Coutts of New Zealand.

Advertisement for a national bank with contact number 0800 000 111 and a £29.50 offer.

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, featuring the word 'Cricket' and other text.

RICH AND POOR IN RUGBY'S NEW WORLD £3 million gives Quins a gilt edge

Robert Armstrong
HARLEQUINS are set to become the wealthiest rugby club in Britain as a result of a £3 million investment by a London-based sports and leisure development company, Riverside plc, which has sports outlets in Chiswick, Croleydon and Northwood, and up to a 40 per cent equity interest in Harlequins FC in return for its investment, announced yesterday, which will underpin the players' wage bill and the building of a stand at The Stoop.

Harlequins have budgeted for a £1.5 million wage bill for next season. The salaries of their full-time ancillary staff, including the director of rugby Dick Best, are thought likely to add £150,000 to the club's outgoings. Apart from the NEC and Riverside investment, the club are banking on additional income from television contracts, corporate hospitality and the sale of long-term debentures.

Work has begun on a new 4,500-seat stand which is expected to be completed by November at a cost of £4.5 million. The majority of the debentures on offer will be in the new stand situated on the north side of The Stoop which will include a state-of-the-art hospitality boxes to be leased out to companies.

Cash-strapped Wigan put out begging bowl to stop Robnson from leaving for Australia in £1.25m deal

Paul Fitzpatrick
WIGAN are to ask for financial help from the European Super League in an attempt to keep Jason Robnson at Central Park.

Wigan's 22-year-old winger is established as an outstanding talent but his reputation has soared in the past week thanks to Wigan's successful cross-code involvement with Bath and the Middlesex Sevens.

problems could mean the loss of more of their best players, it is not all gloom at Central Park and the announcement of Britain's Academy squad (under-19s) to play France at Carcassonne on June 5 confirms the club's playing strength.

Tennis Courier bitten by sharp Gumy

Stephen Bierley in Rome
BY FAR the most visually impressive court at the Foro Italico is not the campo centrale, where Sunday's 53rd Italian Open men's final will be played, but the older grandstand. Eighteen vast neo-classical statues are ranged around its perimeter, and huge slabs of marble comprise the bench seating.

ian Open and French Open twice, the leading Slam victories being the Australian Open in 1993. Gumy, from Buenos Aires, has steadily climbed the world ladder to 61st, a few places above Britain's Greg Rusedski, a couple of rungs below Tim Henman. He was not expected to win.

Boxing Tyson-Lewis deal close to completion, says Maloney

Kevin Mitchell
THERE are encouraging signs last night that the protracted and often acrimonious negotiations for a fight between Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis were about to bear fruit. Lawyers and promoters were in the final stages of discussions in New York, according to Lewis's manager Frank Maloney, who cancelled a press conference at the last minute yesterday to accommodate further developments.



Step up... Alistair Brown would set out the Indian bowlers as soon as they had paced out their run-up

Brown stakes his claim

David Foot on the Surrey batsman who can supply both qualms and charm and is gambling on England recognition this weekend

THERE is an appealing gambler's instinct about Surrey's Alistair Brown. The Racing Post is apt to be his breakfast reading. Once he part-owned a greyhound at Wimbledon. "It was called Frank's Hat. Came over from Ireland and won a race or two. Good fun."

Then in a team-mate's car, I was asked what had happened to mine. In all innocence I said I had my mechanic looking at it. It must have sounded as if I had my own mechanic as well as probably a butler.

Those who regularly watch him at the crease suspect the gambler's approach is never far away. Instantly he gobbles up upward balls, takes on the bowlers. He is not inhibited by the ritual of early caution.

Draw gives Glamorgan early chance to erase memories

Mike Selvey
LANCASHIRE, holders of the Benson and Hedges Cup, face a resurgent Gloucestershire in the quarter-finals of this year's competition. The home tie is a reward for Lancashire's heading their group after a last-over defeat of the favourites Warwickshire on Tuesday.

Warwickshire will play Glamorgan in Cardiff, last year's beaten finalists Kent must go to Northampton, and Surrey are at home to Yorkshire. The matches take place on May 28, immediately after the first of this season's one-day international tests.

Glamorgan will need no reminding that they have reached a solitary Lord's one-day final, and that in 1977. They will also not have forgotten that a chance of another disappeared last season in a NatWest semi-final funk against Warwickshire when in front of their home crowd they were bowled out for 86 and on the way home by 3.50pm. This match at least offers the chance to get straight back on the horse, although it remains a formidable beast.

Tuesday is the decider for the home draw. They have a tough new captain in David Byas but many will need convincing that this season they can make genuine progress towards re-establishing themselves as a major force.

Judo

Britain's Olympic prospects face European test

Duncan Steen in The Hague
THE four-day European championships get under way here today with Britain keen to improve on the world championships seven months ago, when Sharon Rendle's featherweight bronze was their only medal.

Greame Randall at light-middleweight, two British No. 1s who have achieved Olympic qualification by winning international competitions. And the former European light-middleweight champion Ryan Birch has successfully moved up to middleweight.

The British women's team, once the envy of Europe, have only one defending champion, Nicola Fairbrother at light-weight. But the light-heavy-

Golf Sherry has big hopes

David Davies on the leading lights in this week's B&H International

COLIN MONTGOMERIE wants to win two tournaments out of his next four. Gordon Sherry wants nothing less than to become the world's No. 1 golfer, and suffering Severus Ballesteros would settle for just a glimpse of what used to be.

All three are at The Oxfordshire, near Thame, today for the Benson and Hedges International, the £700,000 tournament with a £116,660 first prize. Every member of the last Ryder Cup team is present, including Philip Walton, who last week missed the cut in the Byron Nelson tournament in Texas.

Montgomerie is not yet tired of being the European No. 1, the position he has occupied for the past three years and in which he must remain if he is not to go backwards on the Volvo Order of Merit for the first time in his career.

But so far he has played only five rounds on the European tour, the four that led to him winning the Dubai Classic, and one last week in Madrid. After that he had to withdraw because his baby daughter was ill in hospital, a situation now happily remedied.

"I need at least one win in the next month," he said, "to boost my Order of Merit position and to give me confidence for the US Open." This latter is the championship that Montgomerie believes gives him his best chance of a major title, and he is aiming to improve his putting before he goes there.

"I suppose if you hold them all," he said, "this wouldn't be the interesting game that it is." But reality quickly intruded on this attempt at philosophy. "The problem is that when you miss a few you lose confidence, you start to be concerned about holding the one back before you've hit the first one, and you get tentative."

Montgomerie might have been analysing, precisely, Tom Watson's troubles, and at 33 the Scot is rather too young to be thinking that way.

Confidence is a problem for Ballesteros too. But what would work wonders would be a finish much higher than 49th, the best he has achieved in four European events, having missed the cut in two of them.

Sherry makes his debut on the European tour this week and he immediately, if unwittingly, revealed the extent of his ambition. Asked about his performance in the US Masters, where he missed the cut, he said: "I'm looking forward to going back there, next year or the year after." To do that, of course, he will have to win a championship or be in the top two of the Order of Merit at the right time, a tall order even for 6ft 8in of talented golfer.

Sherry plays with Sandy Lyle, a kinder draw than that given to Paul Hareington, last week's winner of the Spanish Open. The Irishman plays with someone he last saw in the flesh two years ago when he attended the great man's Masterclass, one Nick Faldo.

Apologies of Faldo's presence on a golf course, Montgomerie said yesterday: "He can be intimidating when you're playing on the same course as him, never mind against him." For Harrington it will be an illuminating, if not entertaining, experience.

Cricket
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Counties update

Dorsetshire	31	Middlesex	40
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Royal Festival Hall

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Six clubs on Wembley way, page 14

Rush makes his choice, page 14

The highs and lows of rugby, page 15

An each-way bet for England, page 15

SportsGuardian

DEFEAT AT YORK DEPOSES THE ANTE-POST FAVOURITE FOR THE DERBY



House taken off the market... Nash House (second from right) is beaten into fourth place behind Glory Of Dancer (second from left) in the Homeowners Dante Stakes at York yesterday. Nash House had been the ante-post favourite for the Derby but is now unlikely to run in the big race at Epsom on June 8. Lord Weinstock's colt, who had made a strong impression when winning at Newbury last month, finished in some distress and bookmakers removed him from ante-post lists. Glory Of Dancer, Italian owned and trained by Paul Kelleway at Newmarket, is the new Derby favourite at 5-1

Thrill of high flying close to the edge



Angela Patmore

STRESS is a dirty word at the moment. Everywhere overworked employees are frantically doing their relaxation exercises, visualising calm scenes and imagining their limbs becoming heavy. Highly paid (though not necessarily highly qualified) "stress management consultants" warn that if we don't reduce our tension we will wind up dead or cared for in the community. The stressologists say that our problems from whatever cause are really "stress-related". If we hang loose, troubles will clear up, rather like acne.

ing and all your senses are working at their absolute maximum, there's an incredible feeling that I suppose is focus. There is a kind of calmness about it, yet there's an extreme exhilaration knowing that you're firing on all cylinders and that you couldn't possibly ever make better decisions than you're making right now, because you're thinking so clearly. It's as though the blinkers have been taken off."

When Leden touched down after the altitude drop, in pain from frostbite and exhaustion, somebody told her: "Women only ever look that bad in childbirth." No matter: all the stress had paid off.

"The view going up to 40,000ft was absolutely exquisite. I know it sounds strange but I really enjoyed the trip up. I knew I would never see that view again, and it was a very privileged vantage point. Spangles of ice were drifting past me, leaving this glorious vapour trail. I could see the whole of Egypt, the whole of Jordan, the whole of Israel and way into Saudi Arabia, and the wonderful patterns of the desert. It's not the same as looking out of an aeroplane port-hole. You have 360-degree vision and you can see the dark sky above you and the curvature of the earth."

SHE has flown over the Andes with condors (her autobiography *Flying with Condors* is published by Orion in July). To be accepted as a bird by a bird in its own environment is stunning, the aerial equivalent of swimming with dolphins." She has been within a whisker of death ("I made a mistake while paragliding and my wing kept collapsing") and she has seen fellow gliders die — six of them in one "cu-nim" (thundercloud) in Italy, tossed about the works.

But she won't give up her passions despite having just become a mother. "There are more fanatics in flying than in any other sport, and in free-flying particularly. You're looking for those peak experiences. It's like a drug."

The term peak experiences, coined by the psychologist Abraham Maslow, has become unfashionable in the stress-fearing Nineties. Of her peak experiences Leden says: "They remain indelibly etched on your mind. You just want to repeat them, and be there again. They're like a photograph, they're so clear."

Sometimes vertigo gets her on the edge of the cliff and she has to abort the flight. But once she's in the air, all the tensions vanish. A way she goes, "flying with condors", literally on a high.

Police fault Euro 96 security

Ticket black market makes segregation inside grounds impossible says top officer

John Duncan

ATOP Euro 96 police officer said yesterday that there was a thriving black market in tickets and that segregating opposing supporters would be impossible.

Chief Superintendent Colin Macdonald of West Midlands police, who will be in charge at Villa Park for the four games there, said that although the official allocation to Dutch supporters at the ground was 9,000, he was expecting 20,000 to turn up and many of them would have tickets for unsegregated areas.

The first game in Birmingham, Holland v Scotland, has already been identified as a potential flashpoint, with rumours circulating that local English hooligans may take the opportunity to attack either set of supporters. The Dutch have one of Europe's most serious hooligan reputations.

"We always anticipated that segregation would be a problem," said Chief Superintendent Macdonald. "There could be a Scot sitting next to a Dutch fan with a Swiss fan next to him and an English-

man in between. I can't stop that, that will happen. These tickets have gone all over Europe and, while we know who will have the official allocations, we have no control over the rest of them. We can't control it, for instance, if a Scot living in England has bought tickets from an English address."

The Football Association's ticketing policy has been designed to enforce segregation as the most effective way of lessening the risk of hooligan confrontations. That strategy would be seriously under-

United move for Shearer

Ian Ross

MANCHESTER United are planning a determined attempt to lure Alan Shearer away from Blackburn Rovers.

The Donbale winners are believed to be willing to offer a British record transfer fee of £12 million for the England striker.

Although Blackburn's manager Ray Harford has always insisted Shearer is not for sale at any price, he may now be willing to let him leave Ewood Park.

Preliminary negotiations between the two clubs are thought already to have taken place. If Shearer does join United, it will signal the end of Andy Cole's career at Old Trafford.

United's manager Alex Ferguson moved last night to quash speculation that he was about to leave United because of problems over a new contract. He said: "Hopefully I'll have it resolved before I go on holiday."

STOP HAY FEVER BEFORE IT STARTS

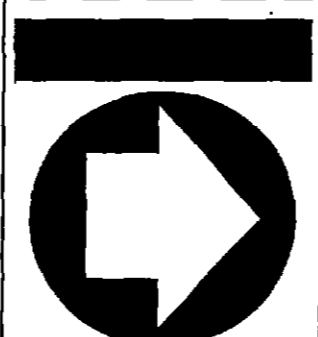
Syntaris[®] is a unique hay fever formulation that, when used up to a week before the start of the season, can stop your hay fever before it even starts.

Ask your pharmacist for more details.

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Hayfever Nasal Spray

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"Our analogue television system is a three-to-one compression system that we have been using for years — and it is stuffed full of grotty herring-bone patterning, cross-colour effects and edge effects." Any doubters should merely watch Michael Fish on a bad tie day.

OnLine G2 page 10

Guardian Crossword No 20,654

Set by Rufus

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

- Across**
- 1 An eight-foot long snooker rest (6)
 - 4 Produced returned bill and sued maker (6)
 - 9 A minor drawback (4)
 - 10 Offer sprawling lion some meat (10)
 - 11 Thus mail goes astray for East African (6)
 - 12 Shown to have a deficit and charged (8)
 - 13 American Lesley's going out with, to no avail (9)
 - 15 Looks composed? (4)
 - 16 Welshman gets backing in the church (4)
 - 17 Sponges surgeons initially call out for (8)
 - 21 Whisk car off in transporter (8)
 - 22 What one does with a bookmaker, of course (3,3)
- Down**
- 24 A blooming comfortable place to be (3,2,5)
 - 25 A minute mark (4)
 - 26 Relaxation, for example, about a moral slip (6)
 - 27 Why brides may conceal having mixed parentage (6)
- Solution tomorrow**

THESE PARADISE

E	A	A	I	R	
D	A	K	L	R	
S	E	I	A		
D	I	V	I	G	O
A	A	R	U		
D	E	A	T		
A	E	R	U		
A	A	A			
S	T	A			
S	T	O			
D	E	N	T	I	A

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,653

- 19 One would feel put out to be so treated (7)
- 20 Greek ferry operator (6)
- 23 A man fore-armed has such a nerve (6)

Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0991 338 238. Calls cost 35p per min, cheap rate, 48p per min at all other times. Service supplied by AFS.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.